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## CRITICAL NOTICES.

## GESENIUS' HEBREW DICTIONARY.

*Gesenius. Hebräisches Handwörterbuch über das Alte Testament.* In Verbindung mit A. SOCIN und H. ZIMMERN bearbeitet von FR. BUHL. 13. Aufl., Leipzig, 1899 (F. C. W. Vogel).

No work is better calculated to give a vivid impression of the progress made in the knowledge of the Old Testament than the new edition of Gesenius' Dictionary, which has just made its appearance. During the four years which have elapsed since the publication of the previous edition, our knowledge of the old Hebrew language has been increased to an unusual degree by numerous grammatical, philological, critical, and exegetical writings. The constantly growing literature, often inaccessible and scattered over various periodicals, makes it imperative that a compendious collection be made of the results achieved to serve the student as a reliable guide. This would require a high degree of self-denial and untold labour, and we cannot be sufficiently grateful to Buhl and his co-workers for the scrupulous care and conscientiousness with which they have worked, and critically utilized the results of the numerous separate inquiries in the field of lexicography. They have created a veritable *dépertoire* and an indispensable reference-book for the study of the Old Testament. It would lead too far to dwell on details, and the following remarks are meant only to be a modest contribution to the exegesis of passages that are difficult from a lexicographical point of view:—

Num. xxiv. 6 נָתַח בְּנַחֲלִים נָטוֹי is very remarkable. If the verb **נתה** is hardly applicable to נַחַל "brook," it is completely unintelligible where the *tertium comparationis* lies between the tents of Jacob and brooks. If we further consider that in triple expressions the comparison is always taken from the vegetable kingdom, it will not seem too bold to take the word נַחַל to mean "palm-tree," like the Arabic **نَخْلَة**. It is true, the old versions did no longer know this meaning of the word. But in Sirach 1. 12 (JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW, X, p. 199) the words בְּעָרְבִּי נַחַל are rendered by ὡς στελέχη φοινίκων. This strange translation finds its natural explanation in

the assumption that the translator knew a word “**נְחַל**” palm-tree<sup>1.</sup>” must therefore be translated “as palms stretch themselves,” i. e. spread their branches.

Isa. i. 7 בִּמְהֻפְּכָת זָרִים in spite of Dillmann's objections, must probably read זָרֶם “like the destruction by a rainspout.” זָרֶם could have come into the text all the easier from the first half of the verse, as זָרֶם and זָרִים are so equal in form. Cf. my *Analecta*, 29, to Jer. xviii. 14.

Isa. v. 30 וְאֹור חַשֵּׁךְ בְּעַרְפִּיהִ. The expression offers both grammatical and etymological difficulties. Perhaps we must read בְּעַד יִפְּרִיהִ, cf. Ps. cxxxix. 11. The suffix in חַשֵּׁךְ יְשֻׁפֵּנִי וְלֹלֶה אֹור בְּעַדְנִי would then refer to יִפְּרִיהִ.

In Isa. ix. 16 we have the verb שָׁמַחַ = Arab. سُمِحَ in יִשְׁמַחַ; vide my remarks in the *Revue des Études Juives*, XXXV, 63, where I demonstrated the existence of that root from Sirach xxxvi. 17.

In Isa. lxiv. 20 רְעוֹה אָפָר לְבָ הַוְּתָל הַטָּהָר the words ought, perhaps, to be differently divided, and be read לְבָה תְּלַחְתָּהוּ<sup>2</sup>, and the sense is probably: “He (the idolater) pastures on the ashes,” i. e. on volcanic soil<sup>3</sup>. The metaphor is sustained; the flame (for לְבָה) as Exod. iii. 2) will seize him and he cannot save himself, and say no longer: Is not deception in my right hand? The combination of לְהַבָּה with לְהַטָּה occurs several times (Joel i. 19, ii. 3; Ps. lxxxiii. 15, evi. 18). The verb לְהַטָּה occurs again in Deutero-Isaiah (xlvi. 25). There are also other parallel points between xlvi. 17–25 and xlvi. 17–20.

Mic. iii. 9 הַמְּתֻהָבִים מִשְׁפָּט does not agree with the parallel עֲקָשָׂו. The reading was perhaps מְעַבְתִּים. Cf. vii. 3, where the same kindred form of עַות occurs. Cf. also עַבְטָ in Joel ii. 7. The expression עַות מִשְׁפָּט is similar to Job viii. 3, xxxiv. 12.

Zech. iii. 9 וּמְשִׁתִּי אֶת עַן הָרָן. The word cannot be etymologically explained<sup>4</sup>. There is no other passage in which מְשִׁתִּי occurs

<sup>1</sup> The original text was, doubtless, “כְּעַבְתִּי נְחַל” like palm-branches”; cf. Ezek. xix. 11, where LXX also render بַּן עַבְתָּם by ἐν μέσῳ στελεχῶν. This assumption is strengthened, not only by the parallel expression in the same verse, כְּשַׁתִּילִי אֲרוֹם, but the passage becomes intelligible only in this way. Schechter's allegation, Job xl. 22, does not prove anything for our verse.

<sup>2</sup> It is true, אָפָר has nowhere that special meaning. Yet are volcanoes mentioned in the Bible (Ps. civ. 32); cf. also Ps. lxxxiii. 15, Deut. xxxii. 22.

<sup>3</sup> The וְ in הַוְּתָל, which came into the text later as a *Muter lectionis*, need not be considered. Cf. my *Analecta*, 61 sqq.; my explanation of Isa. i. 7 as given above; and infra, my notes on Zech. iii. 9 and Prov. xxix. 4.

<sup>4</sup> Graetz reads וּמְהַתִּי.

in a transitive sense (Mic. iii. 2 is certainly Hiphil, and v. 4 is not clear). The reading was probably “ומישתי” “and I wash off.” Cf. the verbs רָחַץ and בָּנֵם in this metaphorical sense, especially in Isa. iv. 4, where the construction is exactly the same. The existence of the root מְשַׁה in Hebrew may be assumed with certainty; both the Rabbinical dialect (Levy iii. 267) and the Arabic possess the word in this meaning. But it was already unknown to the authors of the versions.

Zech. vi. 9, probably instead of הִנֵּה אֶת רֹוחִי, הַפִּיחוּ אֶת רֹוחִי, 9, breathes. Cf. Ezek. xxii. 20, where Luzzatto correctly amends הַפְּחַתִּי into הַנְּחַתִּי. Cf. ibid. the following verse. To our passage, cf. Ezek. xxxvii. 9, בַּאי הָרוּחַ וּפְחַד בְּהַרְוָנִים הָלָה, 9.

Ps. lii. 7, וַיִּחְתַּךְ, probably to be derived from נַחַת, rather than from חַתָּה “he may throw thee.” This accords well with the context. Cf. the חוֹרֵיד, Hos. vii. 12; Obad. 3, 4; Jer. xl ix. 16.

Ps. cxliii. 9, אֲלֵיךְ כְּסִיתִי, perhaps altered from סְכִינִיתִי. The Aramaic verb “to look out” (=Hebr. צָפָה) cannot appear strange in this young Psalm.

Prov. xxix. 4, וְאִישׁ תְּרִמְמִיתִי הַרְסָנוּ, read וְאִישׁ תְּרִמְמִיתִי הַרְסָנוּ (already proposed by Baumgartner). Cf. the parallel בְּמִשְׁפְּט. The versions read, perhaps, תְּרִמְמִית, but nothing can be proved for certain from their free rendering. תְּרִמְמִית occurs frequently in Jeremiah, Zephaniah, and the Psalms. Cf. in regard to this expression Ps. xl iiii., מְאִישׁ מְרֻמָּה וּוּלָה 1, lv. 24.

Job iv. 14 וּרְבַּעֲצָמוֹת הַפְּחִיד sounds rather weak in that vigorous passage. It is further strange that פְּחִיד has first קָרָא and then פְּחִיד for its predicate. I therefore conjecture “וּרְבַּעֲצָמוֹת הַפְּחִיד” “The fire of disease frightened my bones.” This would also restore the parallelism in the verse. רַקְבָּה occurs once more in Job (xiii. 28). יְבוֹא רַקְבָּה בְּעַצְמֵי וְתַחַתִּי אֲרֵנוֹ Hab. iii. 16 is quite in accordance with our passage. Cf. Prov. xii. 4; xiv. 30.

Job xvii. 1 קְבָּרִים לִי cannot be grammatically explained, and is particularly weak as compared with the first portions of the verse. The reading was perhaps “קְבָּרִים מִלְּיָה” “my grave lies before me.” It is true, in that case was rather to be expected.

FELIX PERLES.

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